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From: Cathy Noh [cathy.noh@saylorcompany.com]
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Subject: Statement from South Ossetian Human Rights Head on StateDep HR Report
Attachments: Statement by South Ossetian Human Rights Commissioner on USDoS Human Rights Report 15 Mar 10.pdf

Please consider the attached statement.

Best regards,

Steve

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Statement by David Sanakoev on U.S. State Department Human Rights Report

The United States Department of State's 2009 Country Report on Human Rights includes the Republic of South Ossetia in its Georgia analysis. South Ossetia is not part of Georgia.

We in South Ossetia understand the United States does not recognize our sovereignty. We do not understand, however, how the authors of such an important report could make the claim that information on human rights activities in South Ossetia is not available because there is no access to our country. That is blatantly false. Though my role as Human Rights Commissioner for the Republic of South Ossetia is well known in this region, nobody from the Department of State asked me for any input to its 2009 human rights report. Had they done so, I would have been honored to invite them here to review our records and files and to interview anybody they wished to in researching the Report. We have repeatedly invited U.S. officials to come to South Ossetia to meet our people, to review the human rights situation and see for themselves the steps we are taking to build our nation. Those invitations have been ignored.

South Ossetia cares deeply about human rights. I have spoken widely on South Ossetia's commitment to human rights and its willingness to do what we can—by-rule-of-law—to make sure human rights transcends politics. Accordingly, many in the international human rights community—including some from the State Department—know my personal devotion to this cause. I am well known in this region and have attended international meetings where there have been U.S. government officials in the audience. Just last week I met with international human rights leaders to try and resolve some of the most pressing human rights issues in the Caucasus.

It is wrong for the world to continue to ignore South Ossetia's voice. Whether or not any government recognizes our government is a political issue. To ignore us as a people, however, is in my judgment, a violation of our human rights. I regret the U.S. Department of State has done that in compiling its Report. I hope it will rectify its mistake in the future.

David Sanakoev
Human Right Commissioner
Republic of South Ossetia
15 March 2010